

Become Involved

Public participation is an important part of the CPUC decision-making process. You may informally comment on any issue the CPUC has jurisdiction over, unless you are a party to the proceeding on which you are commenting. This brochure explains CPUC Voting Meetings and how you may make informal public comments at the meetings.

If you are unable to attend a meeting, you may listen to it via the telephone or the CPUC audio or video webcasts. The webcast links and phone number are located at: http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/Commission_Meeting/.

It is not necessary to attend a voting meeting in person to make informal comments. You may also submit informal comments in writing to the Public Advisor's Office. All informal comments, whether verbal or written, are not considered evidence. However, they are made available to CPUC decision-makers as information.



This brochure is part of the CPUC Public Advisor's Office Public Participation Information Series. The brochures in the series are:

- # 1 Understanding a CPUC Proceeding
- # 2 Participating at a CPUC Voting Meeting
- # 3 Participating at CPUC Public Participation Hearings and Workshops
- # 4 How to Become a Party in a CPUC Proceeding
- # 5 CPUC Intervenor Compensation Program
- # 6 Ex Parte Communications at the CPUC

CPUC Decision-making Process

The CPUC reviews all applications, investigations, petitions, and formal complaints through formal CPUC proceedings. Once hearings, evidence, and other considerations are presented in a proceeding, usually, the judge proposes a decision in writing and all parties in the proceeding are permitted to formally comment on the proposal.

The *proposed decision* is provided to the Commissioners for their review. The judge may change the proposal based on comments received and the Commissioners may sponsor their own *alternate proposed decisions*. All proposed decisions, and any alternates, are scheduled to be voted upon at a CPUC voting meeting. At the meeting, the Commissioners may vote to adopt the proposed decision or one of the alternates, to deny the proposed decision, or to withdraw it and send the issue back to the judge for more review.

You can keep track of what the CPUC will be voting on by accessing the CPUC "Meetings, Hearings, and Events" button in the Highlights section of the CPUC website, www.cpuc.ca.gov. The meeting's agenda and all related documents are published 10 days before the meeting.

Want to know more?

To find more information on CPUC Voting Meetings or sign up to speak for the next meeting, go to http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/Commission_Meeting/

Contact Information for the Public Advisor's Office

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04/27/16



Public Participation Information Series # 2

Participating at a CPUC Voting Meeting



www.cpuc.ca.gov



Voting Meeting Specifics

The CPUC meets in public where the Commissioners discuss and vote on proposed policies, rules, and other issues. The schedule and agendas are posted on the CPUC website. Most meetings are held at the San Francisco headquarters but some are held at locations throughout the state. Each meeting starts with a public comment period, and generally, the Commissioners listen and do not respond to public comments. You may address any topic over which the CPUC has jurisdiction, except the following:

- Informal Complaints that are handled by the CPUC's Consumer Affairs Branch.
- License matters that have been to hearing.
- Items on the Closed Session section of the agenda.
- Proceedings to which you are a party.
- Other adjudicatory matters, such as formal complaints.

Participating at a CPUC Voting Meeting

To keep the flow of a California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) voting meeting, rules are used to facilitate the Public Comment Session, which assure as many people as possible can speak within the limited timeframe in an organized manner. These rules are posted on the CPUC website; some of them follow:

- To ensure that you will have an opportunity to speak, you must sign up the day of the meeting at the Public Advisor's table before the meeting begins.
- Individuals who sign up by the start of the meeting may have up to three minutes to speak. However, the speaking time may be adjusted depending on the number of speakers present.
- People arriving after the meeting starts but before the Public Comment Session ends are given only one minute to speak.
- No speakers will be accommodated after the Public Comment Session has closed.
- Individuals with a shared position are encouraged to select a spokesperson for their group.
- The order of speakers is based on the speaker sign-in order but public officials may be taken out of order.
- Signs brought by public speakers can be no larger than 8 1/2 by 11 inches in size. Signs with sticks or any other type of handle are prohibited.
- Speakers may provide copies of their comments for distribution to the Commissioners and/or Executive Director.
- With the exception of representatives of public officials, written comments from people who cannot attend may not be read at the meeting but may be given to the Public Advisor for distribution.
- Attendees may not distribute written materials inside the meeting room.
- The CPUC and state police retain the right to remove disruptive attendees from the meeting.
- The CPUC reserves the right to override the above rules in the case of an emergency or unforeseen circumstances.



California
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www.cpuc.ca.gov/pao



Accessibility

If you need an interpreter or other special accommodations, contact the Public Advisor's Office at least five business days before the meeting. Reasonable accommodations are provided free of charge. You also may be given additional time to speak, to account for the time needed to provide the accommodation at the podium.

The Agenda Order

- Public Comment Session is held first.
- Announcement of any items to be held to a later meeting because the Commissioners are not ready to vote on those items.
- The Commissioners vote on items on the Consent Agenda as a single block. Items on the Consent Agenda are not individually discussed.
- The Commissioners discuss the matters on the Regular Agenda and vote on them one by one.
- Finally, Commissioners' and staff reports on important work not necessarily part of the CPUC's formal process are presented.